

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4282
INFO SECDEF WASHDC
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
USMISSION USNATO
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MADRID 04236

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PEPR, SP
SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER'S PRESS CONFERENCE

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. SUMMARY. IN HIS PRESS
CONFERENCE APRIL 18, HIS FIRST SINCE TAKING OFFICE,
PRIME MINISTER ADOLFO SUAREZ REITERATED HIS "MAXIMUM
OBJECTIVE" OF THE CONSOLIDATION OF DEMOCRACY, EMPHASIZED
HIS OWN COMMITMENT TO A CENTRIST POSITION, AND EXPRESSED
HOPE THE CONSTITUTION WOULD BE READY FOR REFERENDUM BY
THIS SUMMER. HE TOOK A BALANCED POSITION ON RELATIONS
WITH ALGERIA AND THE MAGHREB, REAFFIRMED THE GOVERNMENT'S
FAVORABLE STANCE ON ENTRY INTO NATO AS WELL AS ITS
DETERMINATION THAT THE QUESTION SHOULD BE RESOLVED BY THE
PARLIAMENT AFTER SERIOUS STUDY, AND SAID THE DECISIONS
TO PURCHASE F-16'S, MIRAGES, OR OTHER TYPES OF AIRCRAFT
SHOULD BE MADE BEARING IN MIND OVERALL RELATIONS WITH
THE COUNTRIES IN QUESTION. END SUMMARY.

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2. DOMESTIC POLITICS. SUAREZ CALLED HIS "MAXIMUM
POLITICAL OBJECTIVE" THE "CONSOLIDATION, DEFINITIVE AND
FOREVER, OF A DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM IN THIS COUNTRY". HE
PRAISED THE POLITICS OF CONSENSUS, AND EMPHASIZED HIS
OWN COMMITMENT TO A CENTRIST POSITION, NOTING THE
DANGER OF "BIPOLARIZATION" WHICH COULD FLOW FROM LINING
UP A "GRAND RIGHT" AGAINST THE LEFT. SUAREZ PRAISED

THE ROLE OF THE ARMED FORCES IN THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS, AND EXPRESSED HOPE THAT BOTH CHAMBERS OF THE CORTES (PARLIAMENT) MIGHT COMPLETE WORK ON THE CONSTITUTION AND THE REFERENDUM BE HELD BY THIS SUMMER. HE THOUGHT THERE ALREADY EXISTED A CONSENSUS ON 80 OF THE DOCUMENT AND THAT THIS CONSENSUS MIGHT COME TO EXTEND ALSO TO THE POINT STILL IN CONFLICT. ON THE CONTROVERSIAL DRAFT BILL ON TRADE UNION ACTIVITY IN THE PLANTS, SUAREZ SUGGESTED THE FINAL LAW WOULD EMERGE AS A COMPROMISE. HE DENIED HE WAS PUTTING OFF A CONGRESS OF HIS UCD PARTY, ASSERTING THAT THE FORTHCOMING CONGRESS SHOULD BE "AUTHENTICALLY REPRESENTATIVE" AND "CONSTITUENT".

3. THE ECONOMY. CITING THE NEED TO AVOID "CATASTROPHISM" SUAREZ ACKNOWLEDGED THERE WERE CAUSES FOR CONCERN IN THE CURRENT ECONOMIC CRISIS, BUT ADDED "I BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THERE ARE REASONS FOR OPTIMISM IF WE PERSEVERE IN THE ECONOMIC POLICY UNDERTAKEN IN THE MONCLOA PACTS". WE MUST CONTINUE, SAID SUAREZ, "TO CREATE CONFIDENCE THAT WE WILL EMERGE FROM THE ECONOMIC CRISIS...I SEE THIS AS PERFECTLY ACHIEVABLE .

4. RELATIONS WITH ALGERIA AND THE MAGHREB. SUAREZ SAID IT "HAS BEEN MADE CLEAR" THE GOS HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE ATTACK ON CUBILLO. CALLING RELATIONS WITH ALGERIA "ERODED", SUAREZ REITERATED THE GOS POLICY OF "EQUILIBRIUM CONFIDENTIAL

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IN THE MAGHREB AND SAID HE WAS "DISPOSED TO DO WHATEVER IS NECESSARY TO RE-ESTABLISH A CLIMATE OF CORDIALITY WITH ALGERIA" BUT THAT HE WOULD ACCEPT NO KIND OF PRESSURE.

5. NATO. THE NATO QUESTION SHOULD BE MEDITATED SERIOUSLY SAID SUAREZ, WITH ESSENTIAL FOCUS ON SPAIN'S NATIONAL SECURITY REQUIREMENTS. WHILE NATO MEMBERSHIP IS NOT THE ONLY OPTION, HE SAID, THE POSITION OF UCD AND THE GOS IS THAT IT IS THE "BEST SOLUTION", INDEPENDENT OF THE DECISION AS TO THE PRECISE FORM OF SPAIN'S MILITARY INTEGRATION IN THE ALLIANCE. HE DENIED THE GOVERNMENT HAD "ACCELERATED" THE DEBATE ON THE TOPIC OR IN ANY WAY PREJUDICED THE OTHER OPTIONS. SUAREZ REITERATED THE DECISION BELONGS "SOLELY AND EXCLUSIVELY TO THE SPANISH PARLIAMENT". HE HOPED THE DEBATE WOULD TAKE PLACE WITHOUT DRAMATICS, "AFTER THE CONSTITUTION."

6. F-16/MIRAGE PURCHASE. "THERE IS A COMMITMENT" (IN THE TREATY REGARDING AIRCRAFT FROM THE UNITED STATES), SUAREZ REPORTEDLY SAID, "BUT IT IS ALSO TRUE THAT ANOTHER PART OF THE COMMITMENT HAS NOT BEEN CARRIED OUT BY THE

UNITED STATES". SUGGESTING WITHOUT SPECIFICS THAT THE TREATY SHOULD BE COMPLIED WITH MORE PRECISELY IN SPIRIT AND LETTER, SUAREZ ALSO ACKNOWLEDGED THERE WAS "A VERY INTERESTING OFFER OF MIRAGES". HE HAD STOPPED THAT NEGOTIATION, HOWEVER, HE SAID, SINCE HE FELT IT NECESSARY TO CARRY IT OUT ON A MORE COMPREHENSIVE BASIS WHICH WOULD INCLUDE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL CONSIDERATIONS. END UNCLASSIFIED.

7. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. COMMENT: IN ADDRESSING THE TREATY AND SPECIFICALLY SECURITY ASSISTANCE, SUAREZ SEEMED TO BE RETURNING TO A THEME FAMILIAR IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH SENIOR SPANISH MILITARY REPRESENTATIVES, THAT U.S.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MADRID 04236

IMPLEMENTATION OF SEVERAL ASPECTS OF SUPPLEMENTARY AGREEMENT 7 (TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER, SPEED AND PRICE OF MILITARY DELIVERIES, U.S. OFFERS OF SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT) HAVE NOT LIVED UP IN A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC CASES TO THEIR VIEW OF THE LETTER AND SPIRIT OF THE TREATY. WHAT HE WAS REPORTED TO HAVE SAID MORE SPECIFICALLY ABOUT THE F-16 APPEARS TO CONFUSE DEVELOPMENTS WITH RESPECT TO THAT AIRCRAFT. AS FOR THE F-1 (MIRAGE) NEGOTIATIONS, WE HAD UNDERSTOOD THAT PERHAPS THE MAJOR PRECIPITANT OF THE FREEZ WAS STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO GISCARD DURING THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN ON SPANISH ENTRY IN THE EC. ON NATO, SUAREZ BROKE NO NEW GROUND, BUT IN WHAT HE SAID SEEMED TO INDICAT

AGAIN THAT A DECISION TO HOLD A PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE IN THE FALL AFTER THE CONSTITUTIONAL REFERENDUM, ALTHOUGH POSSIBLE AND PERHAPS PREFERRED, REMAINS ENTIRELY SUBJECT TO A READING AT THE TIME AS TO WHAT THE TRAFFIC WILL BEAR.

8. MORE GENERALLY, SUAREZ SEEMS TO HAVE COME OFF WELL IN HIS FIRST PRESS CONFERENCE, WHICH HAD BEEN WARMLY WELCOMED
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BY THE PRESS. WHILE HE BROKE NO NEW POLICY GROUND, THE VERY FACT OF THE CONFERENCE, FOLLOWING ON HIS HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL APPEARANCE BEFORE THE CONGRESS OF DEPUTIES, SUGGESTS HE MAY BE PREPARED TO PLAY A MORE ACTIVE PUBLIC ROLE THAN HERETOFORE. MANY OF HIS SUPPORTERS HAD LONG HOPED HE WOULD DO SO, IN THE EXPECTATION THAT THE ENHANCED IMAGE OF LEADERSHIP WOULD BENEFIT BOTH HIS POLICIES AND HIS PARTY, PARTICULARLY IN WHAT MAY BE A PRE-ELECTION PERIOD. END COMMENT. STABLER

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